Countdown to doctoral degree

(according to the RerNat-O)

- Checklist –

The final part of your PhD entails three major steps:

thesis submission, **thesis defense** and **thesis publication**.

You can get your degree only after completing all three steps within the deadlines!

Time (approx.)	**Task**	☑
	Step 1: Thesis submission	
6 months before submission	In the last thesis advisory committee meeting, discuss the *thesis format* (monography or manuscript-based), *submission* and potential *members of the examination board* for your thesis defense with your TAC members. • **Rules** for the **composition of the examination board** (for details see RerNat-O 2018 §11): ○ A minimum of **six members**, including at least three from your doctoral program. ○ All members must hold an examination accreditation in GAUSS. Especially if external members are requested to be included, they have to apply for an individual examination accreditation (see https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/577091.html#einzel). Important: Make sure the respective person(s) applies for the examination accreditation long before you want to submit your dissertation, so that, if the application is unsuccessful you can still change the examiner. Only after the approval of the *application for individual examination accreditation* you can finally submit and apply for the doctoral examination procedure. ○ The following must apply to the (two) **reviewers of your dissertation**: » hold an examination accreditation for your specific Ph.D. program, » at least one of them must be a member of your thesis advisory committee, » at least one of them must be a full professor of the University of Göttingen, » at least one of them should not be involved in your publication(s) as a co-author (published, accepted, under revision, submitted or being prepared for publication), » at least two reviewers must attend the thesis defense. Do not only ask potential members if they would be willing to serve in your examination or to act as reviewer, but also if they will be available to take active part in your thesis defense (about 6 weeks after submission). Important: Please **check the composition with the respective deanery or program office** ahead of the submission.	

5-6 months before submission	Make sure that you have fulfilled the **credit requirements according to your program** specified in the corresponding appendix of the RerNat-O, and that you have attended the mandatory *Seminar on Good Scientific Practice*. The credits need to be collected/documented on your *Checklist for PhD Students* (*proof of performance* or *Leistungsnachweis*). Important: This also includes special teaching requirements. Please check your degree regulations well ahead of time and make sure you have fulfilled the requirements.	
min. 4 months before submission	Discuss with your supervisor if you will write a **monography** (§10 (2)), or a **manuscript-based dissertation** (§10 (3)). See also "Format of dissertation" below. In case of a manuscript-based dissertation: application is not required (specific rules apply in the programs Chemistry, Geography and Geoscience, see appendix 8 and 9 RerNat-O, respectively); make sure to check possible copyright issues for publication of your thesis with the journal publishers well in advance!	
2-3 months before submission	Ask your supervisor when he/she would have time to proofread the final draft of your dissertation. Plan accordingly.	
6-7 weeks before submission	• Inform your program office or deanery of the **planned submission** (informal by e-mail) and submit the proposal for your examination board according to the criteria of RerNat-O §11 (see above). If not already done, clarify whether all members of your examination board hold an examination accreditation. ○ Send your filled and signed checklist (TAC-meetings and credit achievement) to your deanery or program office for approval. • **Arrange date, time and location for your thesis defense** with the members of your examination board. Important: the thesis defense has to take place approximately 6 weeks after the thesis submission. In case of scheduling conflicts with more than two members of the examination committee, please select a new member available for your thesis defense (approval is required as well). • Please clarify in advance of the submission whether the reviewers (!) would like to receive a **printed version of the dissertation**.	
2-3 weeks before submission	Only in well-founded cases: discuss with your supervisor if you need to apply for a **restricted online publication / embargo** (§21 (8)). Upon completing the publication process, only an abstract will be accessible for one year after the thesis defense; you may already receive your doctoral certificate (see https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/577097.html). Important**:** *If you are considering **pursuing an academic career**, please make sure that you familiarize yourself with the eligibility criteria of various funding agencies concerning the cut-off dates for applying for fellowships. Especially the highly attractive longer term or junior group funding schemes (e.g. Emmy Noether, Sofja Kovalevskaja, Helmholtz, Fritz Thyssen) are varying in this regard. For some the cut-off date is the date of your PhD certificate, for some it is that of your thesis defense, which makes a noteworthy difference when, for example, you can only apply up to four years after your PhD. In this regard,*	

	please make yourself familiar with these regulations early on and, if possible for you, consider a restricted online publication to avoid missing the chance to apply for these funding schemes. Please check the cut-off dates of a selection of fellowships here (please note the list is not exhaustive).	

Format of dissertation	Information for templates and details on what to include in the dissertation can be found in §10 RerNat-O:
	• Cover page and page 2 (English or German) according to the template in Annex 2/Anlage 2 of the RerNat-O (Please note: you are not allowed to use the university "seal" in the design of the doctoral theses; the use of the logo is permitted)
	• No other format requirements apply. See handout.
	• Use of AI Tools – Declaration Requirement
	  ○ In accordance with the rules of Good Scientific Practice, **you must make transparent if you have used AI tools in your thesis**. This includes specifying which one(s) were used, where, for what purpose, and to what extent.
	  The University recommends Guiding Questions for Transparency in the Use of AI in Examinations.
	  ○ It is recommended to include the declaration in Material and Methods, but it may also be included on page 3, before the references, as specific footnotes, or before individual chapters.
	• Do not include:
	  ○ Place of birth on cover page
	  ○ Affidavit (already included in the *Promovierendenerklärung*)
	  ○ CV	

Supplements, code, etc.	If you plan to provide original data, code or other relevant supplements, please use a repository that offers a permanent link and reliable long-term storage such as **GRO.data** (Göttingen Research Online.Data) and include the DOI in your thesis.	

Day of submission	Submit your dissertation and application for the doctoral examination **online** via eCampus. Please use the form *Application for doctoral examination* (Promotionsprüfungsantrag/Antrag auf Promotionsprüfung) *(see here for further instructions).*
	• The following data and documents are requested in the submission form:
	  ○ Final *title* of your dissertation.
	  ○ Declaration which *doctoral degree* (Ph.D. or Dr. rer. nat.) you wish to receive. Please note: you may only use the doctoral degree you have been awarded, i.e. if you were awarded a "Ph.D.", you may not use the title "Dr." and vice versa.
	  ○ Proposal for the (two) reviewers of your thesis (and indication on joint publications) and the (four) further *members of the examination board*, including their *valid email addresses*.
	  Important: all members must hold an examination accreditation in GAUSS at this step.
	  ○ *Time*, *date*, and *location* of thesis defense	

	○ **Upload of the following documents**: » Electronic version (PDF) of the *dissertation* » Copy/scan of the *Promovierendenerklärung* (Doctoral student's declaration), which you have completed at start of your PhD » approved *Checklist for PhD Students / proof of performance / Leistungsnachweis;* please have the document already approved by the respective Dean's/Program Office » *CV* » Optional: 〉 copies of *publications* in connection with dissertation 〉 application for *restricted online publication/embargo*, if applicable 〉 *consent* to video-disputation (includes also hybrid format (§16 (2)), if applicable 〉 other documents ○ **Submit as hardcopy** to the respective deanery or program office the signed PDF *Application for doctoral examination** (which you receive at your email-address registered in eCampus after you have sent the online form). Submission of a printed and bound copy of your dissertation is not required! ○ Important: Please clarify (in advance of the submission) whether the reviewers would like to receive a **printed version of the dissertation**. If a printed version is explicitly *requested in text form by a reviewer within two weeks of being appointed*, the dissertation will only be reviewed after submitting the printed version! Any delay in providing a printed version by the candidate might result in a postponement of the defense - you are responsible for the printing & timely distribution! *please note, the examination procedure can only start once the respective deanery or program office has received (at least (via email) the digital version of) the signed *Application for doctoral examination*. The submission of the signed application meets the submission deadline.	
Step 2: Thesis defense		
Admission to doctoral examination	• You will receive a confirmation of your successful admission to the doctoral examination via e-mail (at your email-address registered in eCampus). • Did you clarify whether the reviewers would like to receive a printed version of the dissertation (see above)?	
Approx. 6 weeks after submission: **Thesis defense**	• At least two thirds of the members of the examination committee must be present at your **defense** including at least two reviewers of the dissertation. The exam can go ahead as long as only 1 or 2 members (not the reviewers) are absent. • The disputation should take place in person but may be in a hybrid or online format in accordance with §16 (2), provided you agree to this procedure at least in text form. • Audio and/or video recordings of the oral examination are not permitted.	

After thesis defense until awarding of degree	• Should you need a **preliminary certificate**, inform the GAUSS Office. We will prepare and send it to you (please allow 5-10 days). • You can exmatriculate the day after the defense – enrollment as a student is not necessary for the thesis publication. If you do so within one month after the official start of lectures in the current semester, i.e. approx. 6-7 weeks after 1 April/1 October, you can apply for reimbursement of the semester fee (see here). • You may inspect the thesis evaluations and minutes of the thesis defense. Please contact the GAUSS Office. • **Revise your dissertation** (check with supervisor and examination board members if revisions are required) and **prepare for publication**. • Important: you may use the doctoral title only after receiving the official doctoral certificate.	
Step 3: Thesis publication		

Within one year after date of thesis defense	**You** have to **publish** your thesis – this is NOT done automatically – see https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/577097.html, and all details in RerNat-O § 21!
	
	The **confirmation of publication** of your thesis has to reach us **within one year** of the date of the thesis defense. **If you miss the deadline to submit the proof of publication, you lose all rights to the doctoral degree!**
	• Complete the required revisions and get a signature on the revision certificate (*Revisionsschein*) from your supervisor. You may publish only *after* the revision certificate has been signed.
	• **Publish thesis!** Make sure to **start the publication process at least two weeks before the deadline** (= one year after your thesis defense) to ensure a timely publication!
	• Submit the revision certificate and the proof of publication to the GAUSS Office (see RerNat-O §21)
	  ○ In case of **publication via SUB**, the proof is send to us directly.
	  » *If applicable*: **you need to submit the** restricted online publication / **embargo directly to the SUB**, together with your dissertation, the abstract, and all other documents they require for publication. Only an abstract of your thesis will be accessible online until one year after your thesis defense.
	  ○ In case you **publish it as a book**: send us confirmation by the publisher.
	  ○ Only in exceptional, well-founded cases and upon application within one year of your defense date, the program committee may extend the one-year deadline.
	
	Important: **you** have to keep the exact deadline for publication in mind since GAUSS will NOT remind you of the publication. **If you miss the deadline, you are no longer eligible to receive the doctoral degree/certificate!**	

Graduation ceremony	• You are automatically registered for the upcoming graduation ceremony. Please find the exact date on your admission to the doctoral examination. • The graduation ceremony is a purely ceremonial event (you will not receive a doctoral certificate). • If you are unable to attend, please inform the GAUSS Office. • To be able to take part, the minutes of your thesis defense have to arrive at the GAUSS Office at least one week before the ceremony. Please keep this in mind (and maybe remind your supervisor) should your defense take place shortly before this deadline.	
Approx. 4 weeks* after completing the publication	*during vacation periods processing times take a little longer - please understand that this is beyond our control The GAUSS Office can hand out or send you your doctoral certificate. We will inform you via email as soon as your documents are ready for collection. Details of a possible delivery are provided within this email. You receive the certificate and may now officially call yourself Dr.rer.nat. or Ph.D.! Many congratulations! Advice: Because of the risk of fraud with the information on the certificate, we recommend that you do not post a photo of your doctoral certificate on the Internet (e.g. on LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook). **For international students**: In case you need a legalization of your doctoral certificate for international use - **Apostille** - please check HERE for information and how to receive the special authentication (which includes a preliminary certification by the University of Göttingen and the authentication or apostille from the Göttingen Police Headquarters - these are easier to obtain while still in Göttingen)	